

[It's From Time Immemorial, Huh?]

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6. IT'S FROM THE IMMEMORIAL, HUH?

“with one more hour, one more night, one more day somehow to be killed.”

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tired grey eyes squinting against the sun. His words come out now vague, now blunt, but always puzzled.) [6?] IT'S FROM TIME IMMEMORIAL, HUH? Recorded by Herman Partnow member of the staff of the Federal Writers' Project in New York City (This adolescent is like Walt Whitman's child who “went forth and whatever object he looked upon, he became.” He is still searching for his identity. The girl face, the goat mouth, the shipping clerk hands with the scarred knuckles don't piece together into the lank hundred pounds of elbows and knees. Loose impulses flash in and out of the tired [?] grey eyes squinting against the sun. His words come out now vague, now blunt, but always puzzled.

I could turn out to be the biggest success if it wuzn't for one thing - I can't play dirty tricks on people. I dunno, I like to be with the guys that are buckin it, not duckin it, ya know what I mean? I despise the suckers. I'm this depression generation - I can't wait. I gotta go off and do sumthin big right away. Get sumthin virgin and play it. Play it big. But nuthin happens around here. Why is that? Some man I wuz talkin to in the park here once told me about Moses, how he used to go around like this too until he got disgusted. After a

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while, he said, the older guys they died off, than Moses wuz boss. Is that a fact? I gotta wait the same as Moses? It's from time immemorial, like the man said?

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My personal idea if things wuz different I could amount to sumthin. I could be a leader maybe. A Capone, a Schultz, one a them, not one a the mob. Like Moses - way on top. Why not? I come from smart people, I got what it takes, I catch on quick to anything.... Hey lookit. Them two girls holdin each other around. Is is true about them? Jeez, wotta shame. They're pretty Didja ever read the Well of Loneliness? I did. I got the best books outa the library, it don't help. I dunno, books don't do me no good. Why is that? What's wrong with me anyhow? I gotta snap out of it... One time last spring I hitch-hiked to Philly for three days. It's a funny thing, hitch-hiking, maybe you got a million worries on your head but you hit the road and everything disappears like magic, you forget everything. When I got back to New York it wuz one in the morning. I didn't feel like goin home so I come over to the park here and I laid down right on this bench and stood there all night. There wuz other guys on the other benches and I laid there with my eyes open and looked up at the stars and before I knew it the sparrows wuz singin in the trees. I dunno, I don't never feel lonely is this park, I like it here. I sorta find friendship, I guess. That's important, ain't it? That's the dreamy side of me, I suppose. I like it that way.... Sumtimes I go to a movie, then I walk around thinkin. Lotsa things. The whole world. Money, for instance. Supposin I won a big prize. What would I do? Would I spend it or put it away in the bank or would I go nuts? Sometimes 3 I go to the movies twice a week and I play this game Sereeno. Every day somebody in winnin, I never won once. That way I'm different from other people. No luck. Ya know if I won? I'd go ahead and buy a whole outfit and sail off to some island. Some place nobody ever gone to before. In Africa or Australia or South America. One of them places. I'd buy a gun and a knapsack and breeches and boots and a knife and a mackinaw and, I dunno, I guess I'd travel. Nowhere in particular. Just travel around And then again, maybe I wouldn't. Maybe I'd spend the whole money on my old lady. Send her out to Lakewood for the winter. Ya see what I mean? There's two sides

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to my nature. What's the difference? I don't win anyhow. Maybe I don't deserve it. I wuz always the flower of the class - the bloomin idiot. How hard I try I can't control myself from bein bad. I'm always thinkin of things that don't do me no good. Riddles and things - what's got no legs and walks, or what's got eyes and can't see , or what turns without movin. The trouble is I got things on my mind. (Last week I went over to one a them bars and grills on Third Avenue, just for - well, you know, I wanted to do sumthin unusual. What do ya think I noticed? All the men there they were wearin different suits. Not one a them wuz wearin the same suit. And there wuz thirty eight guys there, not countin the bartender. What ya think of that? Can it be there ain't two people born the same in this world? Is that 4 possible?) Jeez! When the stork brought me to my old lady he musta said to her: "Nuts to you, madam." See that man over there? He don't have no home. He sleeps on a platform of a big buildin where I used to deliver packages. He sells [?] blades, and shoelaces and other things. I see him once in a while when I'm goin home to sleep.... I dunno, it's too much for me, I can't make it out. Maybe it's like that man said to me once; "It's from time immemorial, son." All I know this kinda life is givin me pimples. I got no more moral standards. What do you think, that yeast stuff they talk about on the radio - is that good for pimples?